



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Public Library

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San Diego Public Library

Exhibition Commemorating Argentina's 30,000 "Disappeared" to Open at Mission Valley Branch Library

Program will Also Include Several Special Events Such as Films and Tango Lessons

SAN DIEGO – "Poesía Diaria/Everyday Poetry," an art installation, a program featuring an art installation and special events related to the fate of Argentina's 30,000 "Disappeared," will open April 3 at the Mission Valley Branch Library and continue through May 28. The creator of "Poesía Diaria/Everyday Poetry" is Virginia Giannoni, a journalist and artist whose dedication to human rights issues and Argentina's "Disappeared" has become paramount. The Mission Valley Branch is the first stop on an international tour of "Poesía Diaria/Everyday Poetry." Related events will include film screenings, lectures and tango demonstrations and workshops.

On March 24, 1976, Argentina's democratically-elected government was overthrown by a military junta that embarked on a campaign to wipe out its opponents. In a six-year reign of terror, nearly 30,000 people vanished without a trace. Subsequently they became known as "desaparecidos," the Spanish word for "the disappeared." In 1983, after democracy was restored, a national commission investigated the fate of the Disappeared. Its report revealed the systematic abductions of men, women and children; the existence of about 340 well-organized secret detention centers; and the methodic use of torture and murder. Most of the victim's families have been unable to recover the bodies of their loved ones and the perpetrators of the crimes have not been brought to justice.

The exhibition/installation component of "Poesía Diaria/Everyday Poetry" will consist of a series of vertical banners and bearing approximately 600 black and white photographs of individuals who disappeared. Each image, paired with a commemorative poem written by the victim's friends or family members, was selected by Giannoni from tributes that appear annually in *Página 12*, a Buenos Aires daily. The visual and emotional impact of these newspaper images and *recordatorios*, with each face and poem opening the door to an untold story, is unforgettable. At the Mission Valley Branch Library, members of the public who are bilingual (English and Spanish) will be encouraged to translate these poems, which, in turn, will be entered into a database available worldwide on the Internet. Those fluent in other languages will also be welcome to translate.

"Poesía Diaria/Everyday Poetry" has relevance to anyone interested in literature, modern history, or the struggle for human rights, including the tens of millions worldwide who have lost friends and relatives in similar situations. Space in the exhibition will be reserved for San Diegans to post photographs and poems honoring their own "disappeared."

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Page 2

Exhibition Commemorating Argentina's 30,000 "Disappeared"

"Poesía Diaria/Everyday Poetry" is sponsored by The Survival of the Collective Memory Project; San Diego State University: Library and Departments of Latin American Studies and Spanish and Portuguese; and the Visual Arts Program of the San Diego Public Library. "Poesía Diaria/Everyday Poetry" events will include:

Thursday, April 7 from 7 to 9 p.m.: Film screening of "La Historia Oficial" ("The Official Story") (1985). A classic movie inspired by the fate of babies born to pregnant women abducted by Argentina's military junta. Issues dealt with in the movie include Argentina's history of political violence, the gradual evolution of women's protest organizations, and the erosion of tradition with the first taste of neo-liberalism. "The Official Story" won many prestigious awards, including an Academy Award in 1986 for Best Foreign Language Film. Free.

Sunday, April 10, 3 to 5 p.m.: Opening reception for the general public. Artist Virginia Giannoni will give a brief talk about the exhibition. Free.

Wednesday, April 13, 7 to 9 p.m.: "Esperanza en Tiempos Dificiles" ("Argentina: Hope in Hard Times") (2002), a powerful and inspiring film by award-winning documentarians Melissa Young and Mark Dworkin. The film reveals the dark humor and ingenuity of Argentinians as their country's economy collapses and ordinary citizens confront a 40 percent unemployment rate, hunger and poverty. Artist Virginia Giannoni will be present to answer questions. She will also show a short film "Ausencia" ("Absence") about a woman who discovers she is pregnant just before her husband disappears. Free.

Thursday, April 14 at 7 p.m.: Martin Eder, director of Activist San Diego, and "Poesía Diaria" artist Virginia Giannoni will speak on the continuing violence in Latin America. Eder will focus on violence in Colombia. Free.

Sunday, April 24 at 3 p.m.: Tango lecture and performance. Joan Lindgren, internationally-recognized translator of Hispanic and Latin American poetry and founder of The Survival of the Collective Memory Project, will give a short lecture titled "Translating the Tango." Following the lecture, San Diego's leading tango dancers, El Mundo del Tango, will perform. There will be an opportunity to sign up for a tango workshop held the following night. Free.

Monday, April 25 at 6:30 p.m.: Tango workshop. Participants should sign up the previous afternoon at the tango lecture and performance. Free.

Dates and times to be announced: Workshops taught by Joan Lindgren to teach members of the general public about the principles of translation and their application in translating the poems found in the exhibition "Poesía Diaria/Everyday Poetry." Free.

The Mission Valley Branch Library is located at 2123 Fenton Parkway. Library hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday, 2 to 10 p.m. For more information about "Poesía Diaria," call (619) 692-0394 or visit the library's Web site at <http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library>. The library can be reached at (858) 573-5007. All events related to "Poesía Diaria/Everyday Poetry" are free of charge.

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